

**THE EXTINCTION OF  
EVIL: THREE  
THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS**

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The Extinction of Evil: Three Theological Essays by E. Petavel & Charles H. Oliphant & Edward White

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**E. PETAVEL & CHARLES H. OLIPHANT & EDWARD WHITE**

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THE  
EXTINCTION OF EVIL.

THREE THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS,

*Petavel-Offiz<sup>2</sup>, Emmanuel*  
BY

REV. E. PETAVEL, D. D.,

*Free Lecturer at the University of Geneva, Switzerland.*

TRANSLATED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER, BY

REV. CHARLES H. OLIPHANT.

THE PREFACE BY

REV. EDWARD WHITE,

*Minister of Allen St. Chapel, Kensington, London.*

*Author of "Life in Christ," "Mystery of Growth," etc.*

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"That God may be all in all."—1 Cor. xv. 28.

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BOSTON:  
CHARLES H. WOODMAN,  
144 HANOVER STREET.  
1889.

BT  
921  
12413

'Tis Death—\* \* \*

As though my very being had given way,  
As though I was no more a substance now,  
And could fall back on nought to be my stay,  
And turn no whither, but must needs decay  
And drop from out the universal frame  
Into that shapeless, scopeless, blank abyss,  
That utter nothingness of which I came!

\* \* \* \* \*  
That sense of ruin which is worse than pain;  
That masterful negation and collapse  
Of all that makes me man; as though I bent  
Over the dizzy brink  
Of some sheer, infinite descent!  
Or worse, as though  
Down, down forever, I was falling through  
The solid framework of created things,  
And needs must sink and sink  
Into the vast abyss.

*From The Dream of St. Gerontius.—J. H. NEWMAN.*

## PREFACE.

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The French pieces, of which an English translation is given in the following pages, form some of the principal contributions of Dr. Emanuel Petavel to a theological movement which has now lasted for forty years; having at length attained dimensions which promise a far wider extension in years to come. Like all other modern theories of Biblical interpretation it is a revival,—but one inwardly endowed with an unusual confidence that it is indeed a revival of apostolic teaching, taken in its most obvious sense from the records of Holy Scripture.

The leading idea of the movement is that man, although capable of survival as to his spirit, in the death of time, is not absolutely immortal, or by nature destined to endless life; but is under sentence of capital punishment, or extinction of all life, through sin original and individual,—a destiny from which he is to be saved only through the Divine Incarnation, that is, the union of the Eternal Life of God with human nature in the person of Christ, by Regeneration, and by Resurrection in glory. False religions everywhere represent salvation as man's natural work towards God. The one true

religion of Christ represents salvation as God's supernatural work towards man. This work of God consists in three acts of grace : (i.) in the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, that thereby in the Atonement by the Sacrifice unto death of the God-Man, He might "make an end of sins," and bring in the free gift of justification of life, or acceptance for sinners ; (ii.) in the gift of the Holy Spirit to dwell, as in a temple, in the body of the believer (1 Cor. vi.) to communicate the Divine Image and Eternal Life to the soul ; (iii.) in the future Resurrection of the Dead in "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. viii. 1-14.) Then the message of the Gospel of God is summed up in divine words thus,—*Unless men are born twice, they will die twice.* "Ye must be born again," or die the "second death." (John iii. 1-7 ; Apocalypse xx. 14.) Those who do not possess the sanctifying, renewing, immortalizing Spirit will perish everlastingly. Those who are born of God, will "live," in the glory of the Father, in this boundless universe, "for ever and ever."

The adherents of this doctrine believe that nothing is more incredible than that—in a revelation delivered in two distinct languages, Hebrew and Greek, at sundry times and in divers manners, during fifteen hundred years, from the days of Moses to those of St. John—all the principal words employed in both,



to denote the issues of obedience or disobedience to God, are uniformly to be understood in a "figurative" sense, and were so used by the writers, without breaking down once into the plain and literal meaning of the terms for *life* and *death* eternal.

Accordingly, this proposed natural and indeed scientific mode of dealing with the Scripture Revelation, once set forth, has spread rapidly throughout the missions of the Anglo-Saxon world, through India, and through the English-speaking colonies. It has been widely extended also in America, although official persons are seemingly ignorant of the fact. It has also been widely extended in French-speaking countries.

Among those who have taken the lead in the successful diffusion of these ideas have been Dr. Petavel and M. Charles Byse, both now of Lausanne. I myself was some years before them in the English field, in this enterprise, but to them are specially due the opening and prosecution of the propaganda on the European Continent. To this labor, including their joint translation into French of my own work entitled *Life in Christ*, they brought the most complete understanding of the doctrine to be maintained, the most exact and finished Biblical scholarship, and the resources of a peculiarly penetrating and attractive style. Frenchmen have often said

that few English books have enjoyed the advantage of such a translator as my beloved friend, M. Charles Byse. For the result, it may be said that Dr. Petavel and M. Charles Byse have firmly established this doctrine among the theologians of Europe, and given it a commanding place in the religious thought of the Protestant Churches.

The principal piece contained in these essays is a masterpiece of French controversial writing in the original; but holds a still more important place in theology, as the most complete exegetical refutation of the vague schemes of Universalism now in vogue, in view of their bold pretensions to represent the teaching of Holy Scripture. It establishes, as on a rock, the main truth that, although all souls may survive in the first death,—some perhaps for instruction, some for judgment, some for happy repose, or, on the other hand, all in unconsciousness,—such survival affords no pledge of immortality, any more than the survival of the butterfly from the chrysalis gives an assurance of the butterfly's eternal being; since at the resurrection of judgment the finally reprobate will be "destroyed body and soul in Gehenna." (Matt. x. 28.) "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; but strait is the gate which leadeth unto life." "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever."

(1 John ii. 17.) For all who, after exhausting and refusing the methods of mercy, lose the eternal life, there remains only the awful sentence of "destruction from among the people," "everlasting destruction" in the "second death." (Acts iii. 23; 2 Thess. i. 9.)

The influence of this faith in preaching is to communicate a reality to thought, feeling, and speech, which is itself an attestation of truth; and I know, after forty-five years' experience in active evangelization, of no practical results of such instruction, when accompanied by the setting forth of the Cross of Christ as the means of pardon, and of the Indwelling Spirit as the Agent of regeneration and sanctification, except those that accompany salvation. Of course, if men convert these ideas into a pulpit hobby on eschatology, these truths will do as little good, and as much harm, as any other selected topics when similarly treated.

Therefore I heartily desire for this noble defence of Divine Truth, in its English dress, a wide circulation in America; being confident that no recent publications are so well fitted to stay the spiritual mischief of the popular Universalist sentimentalism as this work of my honored friend and fellow-laborer in Switzerland. As such I commend it respectfully to the study of the American churches.

EDWARD WHITE.

*Hilda's Mount, Hightwood Hill, London, N. W.  
November 1st, 1888.*